

Applicant: Bartholomä, et al.
Application No.: 10/510,419

Amendments to Drawings:

The attached sheets of drawings includes changes to Figs 1 - 7. These sheets, which include Figs. 1 - 7, replace the original sheets including Figs. 1 - 7. In Figs. 1 - 7 leader lines have been redrawn to improve quality. In Fig. 6, element numeral 7a has been pointed out.

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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

After the foregoing Amendment, Claims 1 - 17 are currently pending in this application. Claims 1, 14 - 15 have been amended. Claim 17 has been added. In the specification, paragraphs [0014]; [0016] and [0036] have been amended to correct translation errors and improve readability. In the drawings, Figures 1- 7 are amended to improve lead line quality and to include reference numeral 7a. Applicants submit that no new matter is introduced into the application by these amendments.

Objections to the Specification

The Examiner objected to the specification because of formalities. The amendments to the specification obviate the objection. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the specification is respectfully requested.

Objections to the Drawings

The Examiner objected to the drawings because of formalities. Replacement sheets including Figures 1- 7, which have been revised to improve quality of the leader lines and to include reference numeral 7a in Fig. 6 is submitted herewith. It is also noted that the so-called cross hatching symbols do not deal with any particular material and are included merely to distinguish between the different

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parts. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

Claim Objections

The Examiner objected to claims 5 and 14 because of informalities. The amendment to the specification and claim 14 renders the objection moot. Withdrawal of the objection to claims 5 and 14 is therefore respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §112

Claims 5 and 15 were rejected in the Action under § 112, second paragraph, as indefinite. The amendment to the specification and claim 15 renders the rejection moot. Accordingly, withdrawal of the § 112 rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1 - 7, 13, and 14 were rejected in the Action under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Applicants' own prior U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0003609. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Claim 1, is directed to a connector fitting for fixing a longitudinal body, for example, a cable, a hose, a pipe, a corrugated hose, or the like, to an opening in a wall. Preferably the opening

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is an opening or a perforation in a housing wall. The connector fitting comprises a chuck, which penetrates the opening in a position of use and is provided with slits that extend generally in an axial direction. The chuck has a thread located on a section, which is arranged and remains in front of the opening. The chuck radially expands outwards in an insertion direction behind the opening into a clamping region containing the slits, and can be tightened on an outer side or in front of the opening of the housing by the thread and a matching tensioning nut, such that the clamping region can be directly or indirectly, at least partially, withdrawn into the opening and thus braced against the longitudinal body. The tensioning nut comprises an abutment acting in the axial direction and the chuck comprises a counter-abutment adjacent to the thread section and the counter-abutment exerts pressure on the abutment in a released position of the chuck.

Regarding claims 1 - 17, the inventors' own U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0006309 (the '309 reference) does not show a chuck comprising a threaded section with a counter abutment adjacent to the threaded section. Furthermore the flange or stop 20 of the '309 reference has an opposite effect than the abutment (4a, 4b) of the present invention. In the cited publication, the chuck with the help of this stop, is withdrawn into the opening 3 and therefore pressed together, whereas the abutment according to the present invention concerns

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preventing an unintentional removal of the chuck from the fitting in use and in tightening.

A comparison of the release position according to Figure 2 of the '309 publication with the present application clearly shows that the stop 20 of the '309 reference in the release position is not engaged. Only in the use position, when the nut 11 is contacted from below in order to displace the chuck from the opening 3, is the stop engaged.

Thus, the '309 reference operates in a completely opposite way from the present application and as claimed in claim 1. This is discussed in the specification at paragraphs [0003] - [0004] (the '309 publication claims priority to DE 100 33 911 C1). Furthermore, the present specification at paragraph [0007] in describing the present invention clearly states that:

If such a connector fitting is screwed in the opening or releasing direction, the chuck cannot leave the thread of the tensioning nut due to the abutment and the counter-abutment, thus these parts cannot be completely separated because before such a separation can occur, the abutment and counter abutment contact each other and prevent further screw motion in the releasing direction.

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Furthermore, the particular operation of the abutment and counter abutment according to the present invention is clearly described in the specification at paragraph [0034]:

To prevent an undesired total disassembly of the chuck 2 and tensioning nut 3, the tensioning nut 3 comprises an abutment 4a, 4b acting in the axial direction, and the tensioning nut 2 comprises a counter-abutment 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d adjacent to its thread section. The counter-abutment 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d exerts pressure on the abutment 4a, 4b in the released position of the chuck 2 and therefore prevents the chuck 2 from being able to leave the thread of the tensioning nut 3 or from being able to separate from the tensioning nut 3.

This is clearly not shown or suggested in the '309 reference. The abutment 4a, 4b and counter-abutment 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d of the present invention can in no way be compared to the stop 20.

In addition, the upper faces of retaining tongues 7 and clamping collet 9, shown in Figure 8 of the '309 reference, in no way contact with an abutment and therefore do not show the abutment or counter-abutment as claimed in claim 1. The embodiment shown in Figs. 6 - 8 of the '309 reference lacks an abutment on the chuck acting in the axial direction.

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Based on the differences noted above, withdrawal of the § 102 rejection of claim 1 is respectfully requested.

Claims 2 - 7, 13 and 14 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and should be similarly patentable.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 8 - 12 were rejected in the Action under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over the '309 reference in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,626,493 to Post. Claims 15 and 16 were rejected in the Action under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over the '309 reference in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,654,382 to Rubright. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Claims 8 - 12 and 15 - 16 depend from claim 1 and are believed to be allowable for at least the reasons stated above. Furthermore, Post and Rubright fail to remedy the deficiencies of the '309 reference. None of these references show or suggest a connector fitting having a tensioning nut including an abutment acting in the axial direction and a chuck which comprises a counter-abutment adjacent to a thread section of the chuck where the counter-abutment exerts pressure on the abutment in a released position of the chuck. Accordingly, withdrawal of the § 103 rejection of claims 8 - 12 and 15 - 16 is respectfully requested.

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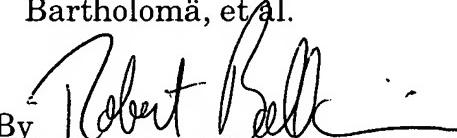
Conclusion

If the Examiner believes that any additional minor formal matters need to be addressed in order to place this application in condition for allowance, or that a telephone interview will help to materially advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone at the Examiner's convenience.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application, including claims 1 - 17, is in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Bartholomä, et al.

By 
Robert J. Ballarini
Registration No. 48,684

Volpe and Koenig, P.C.
United Plaza, Suite 1600
30 South 17th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Telephone: (215) 568-6400
Facsimile: (215) 568-6499

RJB/pp

Enclosures (7)